

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 NSC-10 L-03 NIC-01 OMB-01 AID-20

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 RSR-01 /105 W

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R 281950Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3406

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6389

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: IMPASSE IN MUNICIPAL GOVT

1. SUMMARY. DISPUTE BETWEEN RIVAL PERONIST FACTIONS HAS LED TO OCCUPATION OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING BY EMPLOYEES WHO SAY THEY WILL NOT LEAVE UNTIL INTENDENTE IS FIRED. LATTER, HOWEVER, WAS APPOINTED AND IS STILL SUPPORTED BY PRESIDENT LASTIRI. END SUMMARY.

2. WILD SITUATION HAS ARISEN IN MUNICIPAL GOVT OF BUENOS AIRES. LAST MONTH, PRESIDENT LASTIRI OUSTED PROVISIONAL INTENDENTE FRENKEL AND REPLACED HIM WITH JUAN VIRGILIO DEBENEDETTI, VETERAN PERONIST WHO WAS INTENDENTE UNDER FIRST PERON GOVERNMENT.

3. DEBENEDETTI, MUCH TO CHAGRIN OF SOME PERONIST SECTORS, STARTED FIRING FRENKEL APPOINTEES AND BRINGING BACK NUMBER OF BETERAN OFFICIALS WHO HAD SERVED UNDER LANUSSE, AND BEFORE. SEVERAL DAY AGO, HE FIRED DIRECTOR OF MUNICIPAL CEMETERIES, SEBASTIAN BORRO, BUT BORRO REFUSED TO BE FIRED. MOST MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES SEEM TO HAVE BACKED BORRO AND THEIR UNION CERTAINLY DOES. CEMETERY WORKERS CLOSED CEMETERIES AND YESTERDAY GROUP OF 3 EMPLOYEES OCCUPIED MUNICIPAL BUILDING IN ORDER PREVENT DEBENEDETTI

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FROM ENTERING. ERRONEOUS REPORT LAST NIGHT INDICATED LATTER HAD RESIGNED, BUT HE SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUED DENIAL.

4. WHILE DISPUTE SEEMS TO BE LARGELY ONE AMONG FACTIONS CONTENDING FOR PATRONAGE, LINES ARE BEING DESCRIBED IN IDEOLOGICAL TERMS - ADDING

FURTHER NOTE OF CONFUSION. BORRO WAS APPOINTED BY FRENKEL, WHO HAS BEEN CHARGED BY PERONIST YOUTH (PY) WITH COMPLICITY IN "MASSACRE OF LEFT AT EZEIZA". YET, IN COMING TO BORRO'S DEFENSE, PY ARE CHARGING THAT DEBENEDETTI IS RIGHTWINGER OF LOPEZ REGA FACTION.

5. IN ANY EVENT, PROBLEM REMAINS UNRESOLVED AND IS POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE. IT COULD DRAW IN PRESIDENT LASTIRI AS WELL AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND CHIEF OF FEDERAL POLICE. GROUP IN MUNICIPAL BUILDING SAY THEY WILL NOT LEAVE UNTIL INTENDENTE IS FIRED. LATTER, HOWEVER, STILL SEEMS TO HAVE SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT LASTIRI. GOVT CANNOT ALLOW MINI-REBELLION TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY WITHOUT SERIOUS DAMAGE TO IMAGE OF AUTHORITY. YET, THEY ARE RELUCTANT TO USE RIOT POLICE TO CLEAR BUILDING.
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